

Amendments to the Claims:

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

1. (Currently Amended) A sack for compressing compressible material contained therein, the sack including:

a pliable body portion for receiving the material, the body portion having a lower base portion, a wall and an upper opening for introducing the material into the sack and removing it therefrom;

a cover exterior to the body portion and fixed thereto proximate the opening and having a cover fastener for releasably fastening to the body portion proximate the base whereby the cover covers the opening,

a plurality of compression straps ~~and connectors exterior~~ connected to the body portion ~~and attached thereto proximate the base and releasably cooperable with a first set of connectors located proximate the upper opening,~~ the cover fastener and compression straps being operable to compress material in the body portion;

a pair of shoulder straps, separate from the compression straps, connected to the wall adjacent two of the first set of connectors and terminating in a second set of connectors, the second set of connectors being cooperable with the compression straps when the compression straps are not cooperating with the first set of connectors; and

a panel member juxtaposing the wall and attached thereto to constitute a sleeve on the sack, ~~whereby the sleeve is adapted to optionally~~ configured to stow the shoulder straps between the wall and the panel member when the second set of connectors are not cooperating with the compression straps. [[:]]

~~wherein the sack is configurable to form a backpack when the pair of shoulder straps are not stowed between the wall and the panel member.~~

2. (Canceled.)

3. (Previously Presented) A sack as claimed in claim 1, wherein the upper

portion of the wall constitutes the opening and includes a drawstring for the opening.

4. (Previously Presented) A sack as claimed in claim 3, wherein the body portion is shaped to be substantially cylindrical when full and the cover is cap-like and adapted to cover and extend below the opening when the cover fastener is fastened to the body portion.

5. (Previously Presented) A sack as claimed in claim 4, wherein the panel member is porous and pliable and constitutes a breathable barrier between the user's back and the sack, the sleeve being adapted to optionally stow a stiffening member or hydration bladder.

6. (Currently Amended) A backpack including:
a pliable body portion having a lower base portion, a wall and an upper opening for introducing material into the backpack and removing it therefrom;
a cover exterior to the body portion and fixed thereto proximate the opening and having a cover fastener for releasably fastening to the body portion proximate the base whereby the cover covers the opening;
~~a plurality of compression straps and connectors exterior to the body portion and attached thereto,~~
a pair of shoulder straps, ~~separate from the compression straps,~~ fixed at one end to the body portion proximate the opening and terminating in a first set of connectors at each free end; ~~the shoulder straps being stowable when not in use;~~ and
a plurality of compression straps connected at one end to the body proximate the base and releasably cooperable with the shoulder straps via the first set of connectors
a panel member juxtaposing the wall and attached thereto to constitute a sleeve on the back of the sack, the sleeve adapted to optionally stow the shoulder straps between the wall and the panel member when the compression straps are not cooperating with the first set of connectors; and
a second set of connectors located proximate the upper opening and cooperable with the compressions straps when the compression straps are not cooperating with the shoulder straps, the compressions straps and the second set of connectors being operable with the cover fastener to compress material in the body portion.

~~wherein the cover fastener and the plurality of compression straps and connectors are operable to compress compressible material in the body portion.~~

7. (Canceled.)

8. (Canceled.)

9. (Previously Presented) A backpack as claimed in claim 6, wherein the panel member is porous and pliable and constitutes a breathable barrier between the user's back and the backpack, the sleeve being adapted to optionally stow a stiffening member or hydration bladder.